

**MINUTES OF THE  
AUBURN CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
July 17, 2012**

The regular session of the Auburn City Planning Commission was called to order on July 17, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Spokely in the Council Chambers, 1225 Lincoln Way, Auburn, California.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Snyder, Spokely, Worthington & Young

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

**STAFF PRESENT:** Will Wong, Community Development Director

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLIGIENCE**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

None

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**V. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**A. Sign Ordinance Update – Meeting #5.**

Director Wong presented this item and summarized the sign ordinance changes that are being proposed and the outreach that has been conducted with the business organizations.

Director Wong noted the outstanding issues that need to be resolved by the Planning Commission, including banners, neon signs, bill boards and other proposed changes.

Chairman Spokely asked about the potential of an electronic sign in Auburn.

Director Wong discussed the potential of an electronic sign in Auburn.

Chairman Spokely opened the public hearing.

Bryan Hayes of 2171 Big Box Lane in Auburn addressed the Commission.

Mr. Hayes noted that as a small business owner, particularly in this economy, he is concerned about the Commission recommending stricter signage regulations.

Mr. Hayes noted that signage is very important to a small business owner and that signage for each business owner makes a difference for their bottom line.

Commissioner Worthington noted that a compromise could be achieved that would allow a business owner appropriate signage while still having regulations so that signs are aesthetically consistent.

Commissioner Young noted that minimal regulations are appropriate for signs.

Director Wong noted that the proposed sign ordinance will actually be more lenient in some respects.

Commissioner Snyder noted that he agrees with Mr. Hayes that signage is very important to businesses and he does not want to see stricter regulations imposed on businesses.

Mr. Hayes noted that the Planning Commission is doing a great job and will make the right decision.

The Planning Commission discussed various sign types and proposed regulations, including neon signs in Old Town.

Director Wong noted that the current sign ordinance does not allow blinking; flashing or moving signs.

The Planning Commission asked about enforcement of illegal signs in the City.

Director Wong noted that since the relaxation of the temporary banner program, staff has not conducted a sweep of illegal signs in the City.

Director Wong also noted that once the temporary banner program ceases, staff is proposing to allow a period of time so that the business owners can bring their signs into compliance. Director Wong noted that it will be after the Holiday season when staff commences enforcement of signs.

Chairman Spokely asked whether or not staff received any complaints on signage in Old Town.

Director Wong noted that if staff received any complaints, staff would have contacted the purposed violating party to correct the sign violations.

Commissioner Snyder noted that technology of signs changes over time, but the city sign regulations are more constant. Commissioner Snyder noted that he is reluctant to be too rigid with new standards.

The Planning Commission questioned how regulations would be imposed to allow no or minimal movement.

Director Wong noted that staff will work with the City Attorney and bring back a draft that is consistent with the Planning Commission's Direction.

Director Wong noted that staff can bring back a definition of moving or flashing neon signs that has a specific duration.

Director Wong noted that staff is seeking direction from the Planning Commission on the number of window neon signs that may be permitted, if any?

The Planning Commission discussed the appropriate number of neon window signs for Old Town.

The Planning Commission questioned whether or not signage could be regulated for restaurants vs. bars.

Director Wong noted that according to the City Attorney, the City cannot regulate content and cannot have differing regulations for one business vs. another.

Director Wong noted that if the Planning Commission wanted to limit signs in the future, the Planning Commission may want to adopt an amortization schedule that would allow non-conforming signs for a future period of time.

Director Wong discussed the options for an amortization program with options for phasing out non-conforming signs.

Director Wong advised the Planning Commission of the sign ordinance update schedule and when the new ordinance is anticipated to be adopted.

Director Wong noted that the sign ordinance will be considered again in August by the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission discussed various options for eliminating neon window signs in the Old Town.

Commissioner Young asked for clarification of the legally non-conforming vs. an amortization schedule.

Commissioner Worthington had a few comments on the proposed sign ordinance and discussed potential additions to signage provisions.

The Planning Commission discussed signage in the public right of way.

Director Wong noted that once the sign regulations are adopted, the design guidelines may need to be amended to assure consistency.

Chairman Spokely adjourned the meeting and scheduled the next meeting for August 21, 2012.

## **II. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT FOLLOW-UP REPORTS**

**A.** City Council Meetings  
None

**B.** Future Planning Commission Meetings  
Director Wong noted that a Commission hearing is scheduled for June 19, 2012.

**C.** Reports  
None

## **III. PLANNING COMMISSION REPORTS**

The purpose of these reports is to provide a forum for Planning Commissioners to bring forth their own ideas to the Commission. No decisions are to be made on these issues. If a Commissioner would like formal action on any of these discussed items, it will be placed on a future Commission agenda.

None

## **IV. FUTURE PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEMS**

Planning Commissioners will discuss and agree on items and/or projects to be placed on future Commission agendas for the purpose of updating the Commission on the progress of items and/or projects.

None

## **V. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lance E. Lowe  
Associate Planner